

3195

Translated by
Defense Language Branch

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, et al

- vs -

ARAKI, Sadao, et al

SWORN DEPOSITION (Translation)

Deponent: HASHIMOTO, Kingoro

Having first duly sworn an oath as on attached sheet and in accordance with the procedure followed in my country I hereby depose as follows:

1. I commenced my army service when commissioned an artillery second lieutenant in Dec. 1911. In Aug. 1934 I was appointed artillery colonel and became commander of the second heavy field artillery regiment at MISHIMA. I was transferred to the reserve list in Aug. 1936.
2. I was again called up to the colors in Aug. 1937 and dispatched to the north and to middle China as a heavy artillery regimental commander till in Apr. 1939 I was again restored to the reserve list.
3. Except for the above two periods of active duty I have never been in government service and have been at all other times a simple ordinary civilian.
4. Neither has any official position, which I have occupied been sufficiently important to have entitled me to take part in any planning, preparing or conspiring in relation to the Manchurian Incident, the China Incident or the Pacific War, nor did I as a matter of fact participate in any planning, preparing or conspiring in regard to these incidents or war.
5. I have never been on friendly terms with any of the defendants. As a matter of fact, at the time of the so-called October Incident I was severely reprimanded by Lt. Gen. ARAKI and confined by order of War Minister MINAMI.

Def. Doc. #2231

6. My publications "Messages to Young Men", "The Inevitability of Renovation", "The Road to the Reconstruction of the World", "The Second Creation" and essays which appeared in the magazine "Taiyo Dai-Nippon" were all written and published when I was an ordinary civilian. In these publications and essays were described only my personal opinions as an ordinary civilian and they did not represent any plan or conspiracy worked out in cooperation with any other party.

7. While a civilian I made some public speeches, but these conveyed only my personal convictions arrived at independently and not through any plan or conspiracy with any other persons.

8. In Sept. 1927, I was appointed Military Attaché to the Japanese Embassy in Turkey and served there till Jan. 1930. During that period - on 15 Nov. 1929 - I sent to deputy chief of staff OKAMOTO, Renichiro a report bearing the title of "Situation in the Caucasus and its Strategic Utilization". This report was made in the course of the performance of a military attaché's routine duty. In this report the phrases "Subject to change, of course, with the ^{then} existing world situation" and "in case trouble should arise between Russia and Japan" appear. These phrases should be interpreted to mean that "our attitude has to be altered in accordance with changes in international relations" and "if, unfortunately, a war should break out between Japan and Russia".

It is obvious not only from this report, but from an examination of any and all other evidence that I have never plotted, prepared or conspired with others to wage an aggressive war against Russia.

9. In Oct. 1930 I inaugurated with a view to national reform a study and discussion group called "Sakurakai" or the "Cherry-Blossom Society" whose members consisted of officers under the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Def. Doc. #2231

"Sakurakai" or the "Cherry Blossom Society" was not a secret society, had no regulations and no fees were charged. The society had no connection with the Kwantung Army or its officers.

Discussions were not held relative to the Manchurian Problem nor did the society have any connection with the Manchurian Incident.

10. I did not form any research group on Manchu-Mongolia issues nor did I join or back incognito any such group. I have never even heard of the existence of such a group.

11. In March 1931, I participated in the so-called March Incident plotted by Doctor OKAWA, Shumei with the aim to organize a cabinet headed by General UGAKI, Kazushige for the cause of national reform, but the plan was not realized because of the General's disapproval.

The Incident was not linked with the Manchurian Incident.

12. I thought up the so-called October Incident in Oct. 1931 to bring about a cabinet headed by Lieut. General ARAKI for the purpose of national reform and urged him to accept. But, on the contrary, he severely reprimanded me and at the order of War Minister MINAMI I was arrested by the Military Police. After 25 days heavy confinement, I was relegated to the position of a regimental officer of the Himeji Regiment. This incident had no connection whatsoever with the Manchurian Incident. It was first thought out in the course of a conversation with Captain CHO, Isamu in the beginning of October of the same year, after he returned to Tokyo from Peking. It never materialized. No civilians joined the October Incident.

Mr. KOISO, Kuniaki was not related in any way to this incident.

13. I have never had a chance to talk with Mr. TANAKA, Ryukichi concerning the Manchurian Incident.

In August 1934 I was the commander of the heavy field artillery regiment at Michima City. I knew nothing of the meeting

Def. Doc. #2231

sponsored by SUZUKI, Takashi at the Akebonoso restaurant. I have never been there, nor do I know anything of its whereabouts.

14. In April 1931 as chief of the Russian Section of the Second Department of the General Staff at the meeting for "Estimation of Situation" I advanced the following opinion, to wit: That Army Gen. Headquarters should recommend that the government take a firm attitude toward settling the hundreds of pending questions in Manchuria. Other than this, I had nothing to do with the Manchurian Incident or the founding of Manchukuo.

15. At the time of the Marco-Polo Bridge Incident of July 1937, I was living in Tokyo as a reserve officer on inactive duty and had nothing to do with the incident.

16. While I was at the front, pursuant to the order of Commanding General of the Army YANAGAWA, at Wuhu I fired at ships fleeing from Nanking which were carrying retreating Chinese soldiers. Unfortunately, on that occasion the British Gun Boat "Lady Bird" which was among the Chinese ships was struck and an incident was created. But the fact that the shooting was by mistake due to the dense fog which made me take it for a Chinese ship was brought to light and I was set free from any responsibility.

17. I have had nothing to do with the "Panay Incident".

18. Neither I nor the forces under my command have ever been at Nanking, Hankow or Canton. I have neither ill treated POW's, nor committed inhuman acts against any persons. Neither have I permitted others under my authority to do such acts. I have never been in a position wherein I could have performed such acts.

19. After I left active service, I founded in Oct. 1936 with a view to national reform the Great Japan Youth Party of which no soldier on active duty nor any distinguished personages were members.

Def. Doc. #2231

The party was supported by 1 yen per capita entrance fee and 1 yen per capita annual membership fee paid in by a little less than 20,000 members. It was never subsidized by the army or from any other quarter. It did not aim at aggressive war.

20. After the dissolution of the said party in October 1940, I established the Great Japan Loyalty Society (DAI-NIPPON SEKISEI-KAI), consisting of some of the members of the former. No soldiers on active duty nor any distinguished personages were among its members. This society was maintained by about 5,000 members' entrance fees at 2 yen per capita and an annual membership fee of 1 yen per capita and was not subsidized by the army or from any other quarter. This society did not aim at aggressive war. It was dissolved in September 1944.

21. "TAIYO DAI-NIPPON" was the official publication of the Great Japan Youth Party and then of the Great Japan Loyalty Society after the former's dissolution. Its circulation was limited to its members.

22. In the fall of 1940, I was appointed a director of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association (IRAA), formed by KONOYE, Fumimaro, from which I resigned in February 1941. The said association's object was the practice of the "Way of the Subject". It was not a body which was formed with aggressive war as its aim nor did it work toward such an end.

23. In September 1944, I was appointed headquarters director of the Imperial Rule Assistance Adult Association which was a part of the IRAA, but I resigned in February 1945. After joining this association my only work was the barley crop increase campaign. The association was not a body which was formed with aggressive war as its aim nor did it work toward such an end.

On this 5 day of September, 1947.

At the International Military Tribunal for the Far East,
Ichigaya, Tokyo.

DEPONENT /s/ HASHIMOTO, Kingoro (Seal)

Def. Doc. #2231

I, HAYASHI, Itsuro hereby certify that the above statement was sworn by the deponent, who affixed his signature and seal thereto in the presence of this witness.

On the same date,
at the same place.

Witness: /s/ HAYASHI, Itsuro (seal)

OATH

In accordance with my conscience I swear to tell the whole truth withholding nothing and adding nothing.

/s/ HASHIMOTO, Kingoro (seal)